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REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Identical letters dated 7 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the letters from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq dated 9 September 1996 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/731) and to the Secretary-General (A/51/343), both of 10 September 1996, concerning the security situation in northern Iraq.

First of all, I should like to underline that, since the end of the Gulf war, Turkey has consistently expressed its commitment to the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and has acted accordingly.

At the same time, it is an incontrovertible fact that a terrorist organization is using northern Iraq to launch terrorist attacks across the border into Turkish territory and is targeting innocent people. Turkey cannot and will not accept the negative reflection on her security of Iraq's inability to exercise control over northern Iraq. Turkey is not responsible for the inability of Iraq to control the area in question.

The singular aim of the temporary danger zone declared along the strip of land parallel to the Turkish-Iraqi border is to bar the infiltration of terrorist elements into Turkey from Iraq. Its objective is to act as a deterrent and to put a stop to the terrorist activities that have intensified in the region adjacent to our border as a result of events of the last few weeks.

The declaration of the temporary danger zone cannot be in any way a violation of the territorial integrity of Iraq, as Turkey has neither any claim of sovereignty over this area, nor is there a question of military occupation.

If it had been possible to prevent terrorist activity directed against Turkey originating from northern Iraq, the need for Turkey to enter into arrangements such as the temporary danger zone would not have arisen. The temporary danger zone is, as the name indicates, entirely a temporary defensive measure expected to remain in force until State authority is established in some manner in the region.

Therefore, the Turkish Government categorically rejects the claim that the legitimate security measures taken by Turkey against terrorist activities originating from northern Iraq, and targeting Turkish territory and population, aim at violating Iraqi sovereignty or constitute military aggression.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 11, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative